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### Foreword

To paraphrase UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, climate change adaptation, in particular through better risk management, is a defining challenge of our time, especially in developing countries, Least-Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), as well as in other structurally weak or budding economies that are highly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate variability and change.

Coping with the consequences of climate variability and change challenges all nations, in particular the poorest and the most vulnerable, to empower themselves as soon as possible with newer tools and capacities. In response to this pressing need, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as well as other United Nations System organizations, the International Council for Science (ICSU), governmental and non-governmental partners, convened in Geneva the third World Climate Conference (WCC-3) from 31 August to 4 September 2009, under the key theme “*Climate prediction and information for decision-making*”.

The Conference established an international framework to guide the development of climate services linking science-based climate predictions and information with climate-risk management and adaptation to climate variability and change across the world. In particular, the WCC-3 brought together some 2,500 participants including 1800 specialists from climate science and various user sectors, delegates from more than 150 countries, 13 Heads of State and Government, 81 Ministers, 34 United Nations System organizations and another 36 governmental and non-governmental international organizations.

The WCC-3 was organized in two parts: a three-day Expert Segment followed by a two-day High-level Segment. The Conference Expert Segment addressed a wide range of climate-sensitive issues through a broad review of individual and community-based scientific papers and presentations from the climate science, services, applications and users communities, while facilitating deliberations among a large number of climate service stakeholders and community groups. This Segment also included, among others, thematic forums on gender and climate, climate and communities, business and industry, and capacity building, education and training; workshops on implementing climate services; as well as exceptional poster sessions.

A number of *white papers* were produced by experts from around the world during 12 parallel working sessions. At the end of the Expert Segment, the Conference International Organizing Committee, Session Chairs, Theme Leaders and Rapporteurs finalized the Conference Statement on the basis of the discussions and the outcomes of the various sessions. The present volume contains the Conference Statement and 27 papers presented during the Expert Segment.

On behalf of WCC-3 sponsoring organizations, we would like to thank the experts who contributed these outstanding papers, hopeful that this collection will long remain a most valuable resource to all those concerned with the application of climate predictions and information to promote sustainable development across a broad range of sectors, from health, water and energy to agriculture, natural resources management and tourism, amongst others.



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